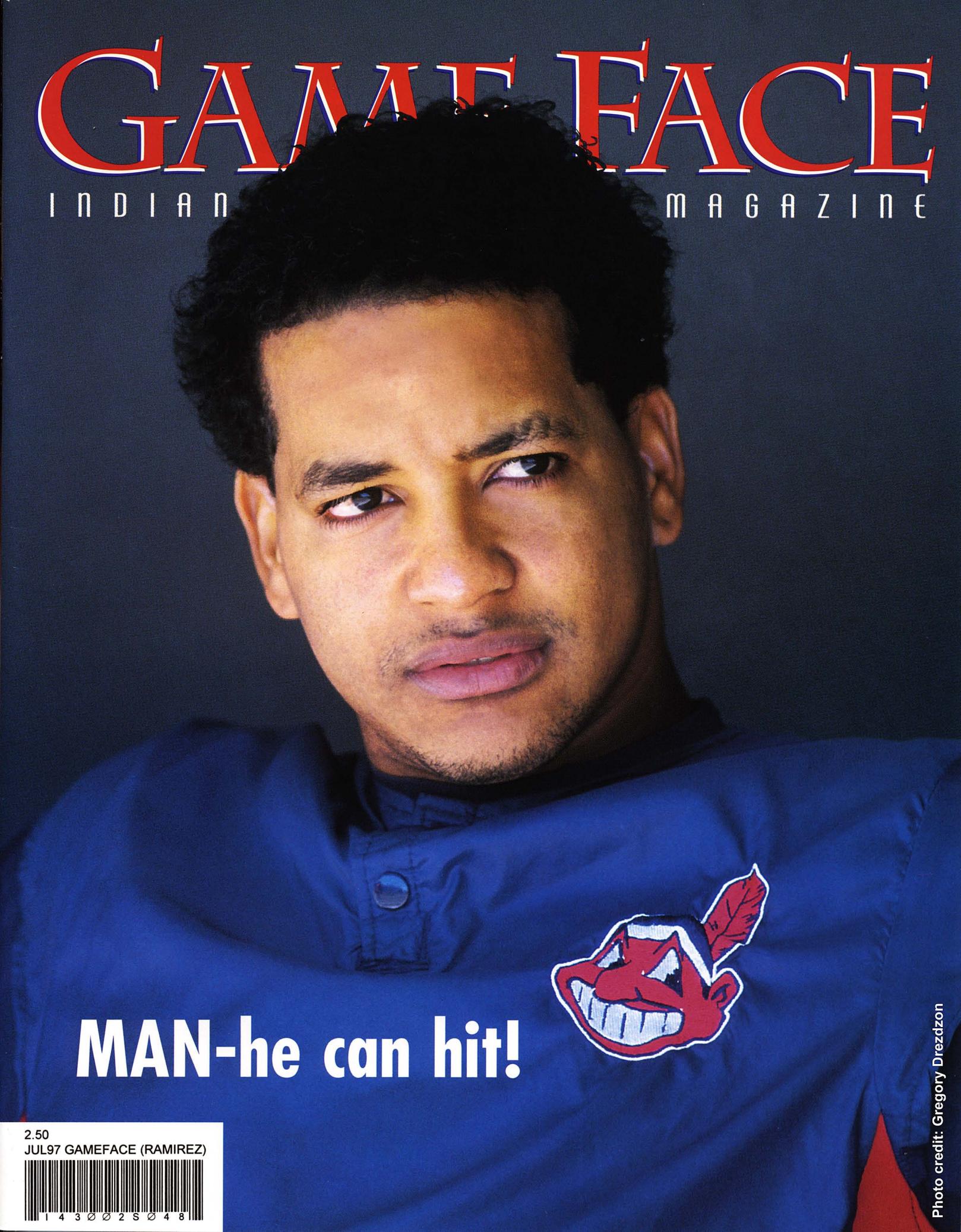


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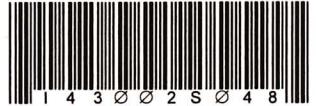
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MAN-he can hit!

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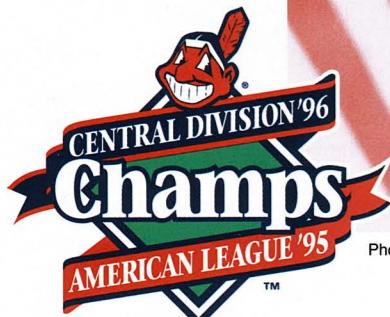


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No Second Thoughts...

by Jim Ingraham Just ask Indians General Manager John Hart if the number 13 really is a lucky number after all. Youngster Manny Ramirez was the Indians thirteenth pick in the first round of the 1991 June Draft and since then he has been knocking the ball all over the field. But, as many say about one so young, the best is yet to come.

12

The Mark Of The Firebrand

by Jack De Vries *The fourth in a historical series of Tribe greats.* George "Firebrand" Stovall led the way, gracing the field for the Cleveland Naps. Although he played baseball with a passion, his numbers say nothing about the man: his story is far more compelling.

54

Brian Giles: Whatever It Takes

by Steve Herrick Brian Giles has worked his way through the Indians Minor League system with a sheer determination that proved the 17th-round draft pick is exactly where he should be—in the Majors and in Cleveland.

88

The ROAR Of The Crowd

by Russell Schneider *This summer, Major League Baseball's 68th All-Star Game will be played in Cleveland for a record fifth time! This series honors those past All-Star Games that brought the stars to the North Coast.*

The 1981 All-Star Game marked the return of baseball after a 50-day work stoppage. It was played in front of a crowd of 72,086 (a record that still stands) and showcased three Tribe players: pitchers Len Barker and Bert Blyleven, and catcher Bo Diaz. The game gave Cleveland the record for the three largest crowds in All-Star Game history.

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Williams Online

You are aware that Matt Williams is the Tribe's third baseman. What you're probably not aware of is that Matt Williams has his own web site.

Yes, a web site.

Williams' web site, located on America Online, or AOL, can be accessed through the Athlete Direct page. Athlete Direct was launched in the Fall of 1996, and Matt's not alone... there are other players accessible through Athlete Direct—Anaheim's Jim Edmonds, Los Angeles' Eric Karros, and Toronto's Shawn Green. Recently, AD expanded to other sports, adding football's Steve Young and Troy Aikman, and basketball's Hakeem Olajuwon.

"We find it's a great way for fans to get closer and learn more about their favorite athletes," said Paul Deveaux, Director of Editorial Content at Athlete Direct. "It's something we hope to expand in the future to include more baseball players and professional athletes from other sports."

All Athlete Direct web sites can be accessed through the Sports Page on AOL, or by doing a keyword search with

Photo Credit: Gregory Drezdzon



the words: Athlete Direct. Williams' site contains biographical information as well as detailed information about his collegiate and professional baseball career. It also features a journal, which Matt updates every week, on how his season is progressing. In addition, fans can download action photos, ask questions, and leave messages for him on the message board.

Periodically, Williams has chat sessions, where he answers questions and talks to fans.

"Over the last several years, the internet and AOL has become a popular medium for people, and for that matter, sports fans, to access information," said the 31-year-old Williams. "My agent and I thought it would be a good way for people to learn more about me and promote the game of baseball."

Omar And Friends

Omar y amigos, which is Spanish for Omar and Friends, is in its first season and is already making a big hit! The program, **presented by All Sport**, takes place before each Saturday home game and benefits organizations such as the Boys & Girls Clubs of Cleveland and the Cleveland Recreation Department.

Approximately 45 children from these organizations are invited to Jacobs Field for a pregame press conference. Afterwards, participants stay for the game with tickets purchased by Omar himself.

In addition, 25 children entering the gates each Saturday home

game are selected at random to join the fun.

Each conference focuses on a topic of importance to kids, and Omar always brings a guest from the clubhouse along to join the discussion. One issue discussed this season was making new friends. Omar brought his new friend, Matt Williams. They told the children about how they met and became friends, and also talked about how Matt had to make adjustments when he moved to Cleveland from San Francisco.

The program ends with a question and answer session, and each child receives an autographed Omar's amigo certificate.

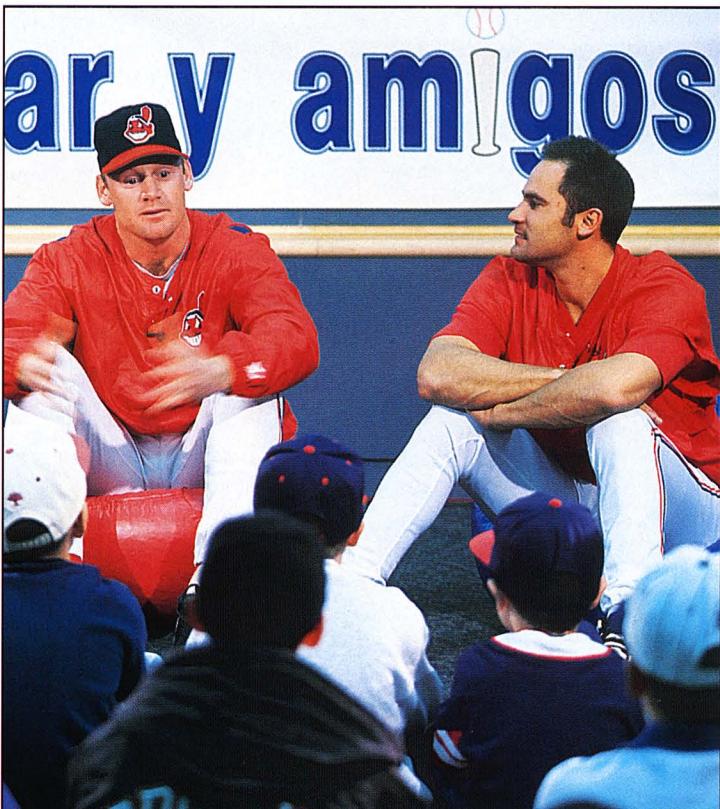


Photo Credit: Gregory Drezdzon

THE FINE POINTS

by Curtis Danburg

As the pennant races heat up in the Majors along with the heat of summer, you always hear the cliche "defense wins championships" uttered by players, managers, broadcasters, and writers.

"Defense means a lot to the game of baseball—most importantly, to pitchers," said Indians four-time Gold Glove award winner Omar Vizquel.

"A good defense can get pitchers out of an inning without any damage. If you don't know how to play defensively, you're not going to win ballgames."

With defense being the name of the game, the Cleveland Indians are very fortunate to boast one of the finest infields in the Majors this year. "I think we're doing a great job defensively this season, which is good because if we're not hitting and we score only one or two runs, we can still stay in the game with solid defense," said Vizquel.

Indians bench coach Johnny Goryl, who instructs the infielders said, "There isn't much I have to do with a couple of those guys. I have three Gold Glove players (Vizquel, Matt Williams, Tony Fernandez) out there, so they can probably tell me a thing or two about infielding."

Fielding the position of infield is usually described as reactionary. Tribe utility player Casey Candaele feels that, "The most important skill an infielder needs is quickness. When you're in the outfield, you have time to read a ball in order to get a good jump on it, whereas infielders need to be on their toes at all times."

Goryl agreed, "Quickness and agility is the biggest prerequisite for becoming an infielder. You look for range from your middle infielders and good quick reflexes from the guys at the corners."

"Infielders also have to be smart because most of the ground balls that get through by one step could have been outs if you were positioned correctly," Vizquel said. "I really like to study the game, so I can get a lot of those 50-50 ground balls. When you've been in the league for five or six years, you have a pretty good idea where to play in certain situations, but you also have to keep in mind who's pitching. If Charlie Nagy is on the mound—he is a sinker ball pitcher—you have to watch for balls going to the holes. On the other hand, if Albie Lopez and his 90+ mph fastball is throwing, opposing batters will have a tough time getting around on the ball, so you just play them straightaway."

There are a lot of things that you must look at before each batter comes to the plate. Goryl explained that one way they prepare for opposing batters is, "Before each series, we look at the scouting reports and information from last season to come up with a game plan. We give our infielders tendencies of the ballclub, hitters,

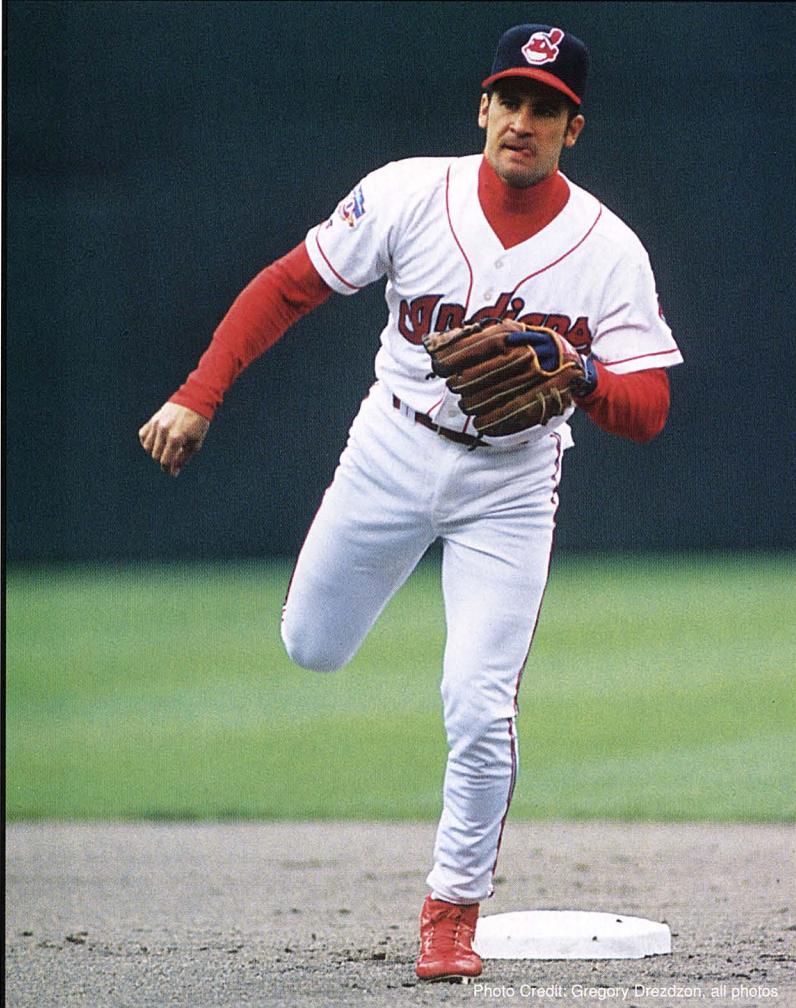
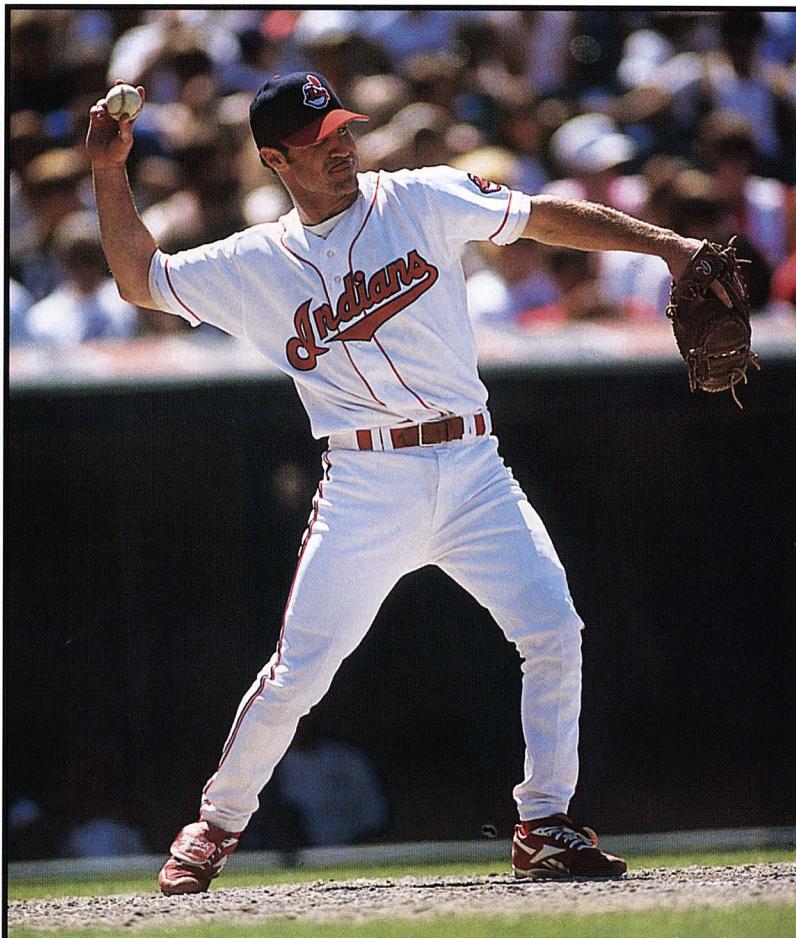


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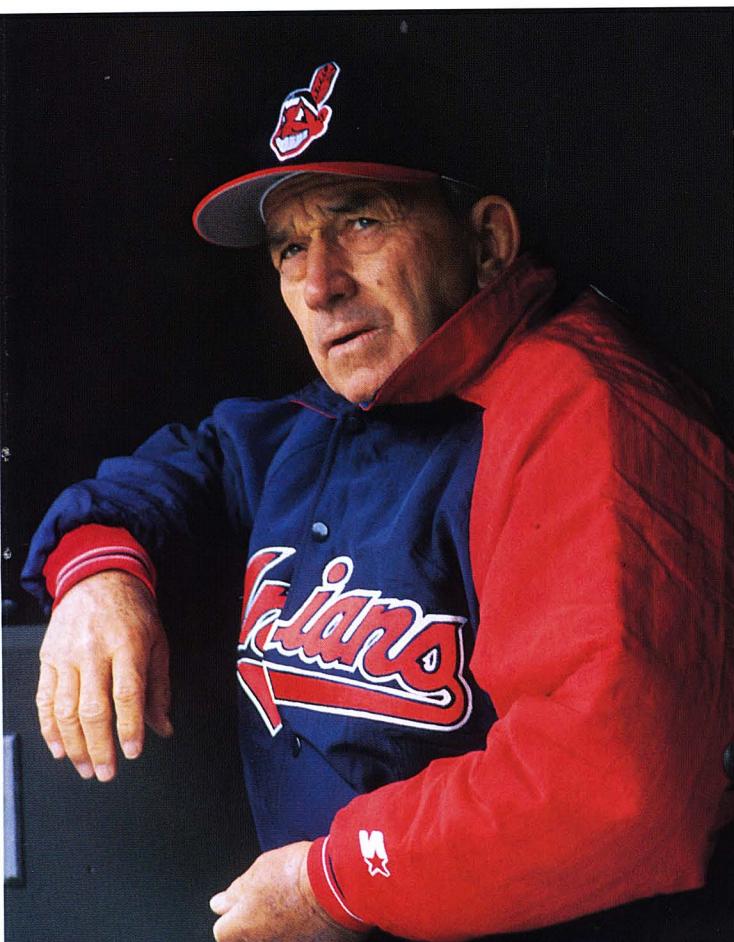


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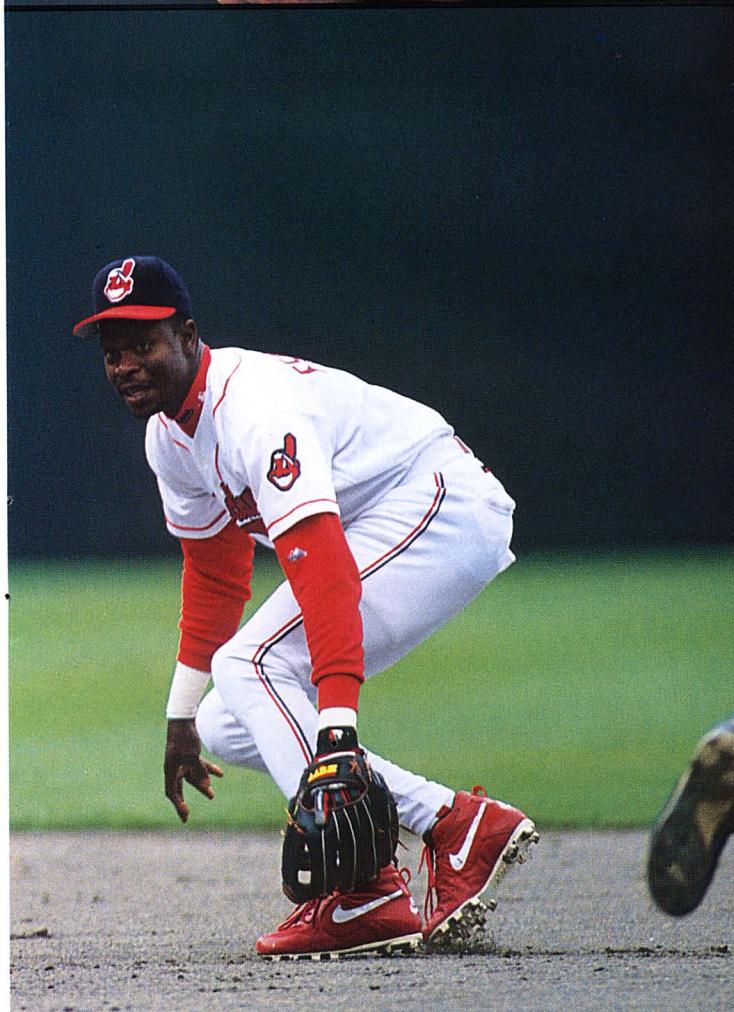


Photo Credit: Gregory Drezdzon

and what managers do in certain situations, so the players can anticipate the action."

Another trait that is vital for infielders to possess, according to Vizquel, is good hand-eye coordination and soft hands. Growing up in Venezuela, Vizquel said he developed his soft hands and great hand-eye coordination by playing unique pick-up games.

"We played a lot of games growing up, but the most important one was called 'the wall.' Two guys would stand about 10 feet away from a wall and would take turns bouncing the ball off the wall to the other guy. Each time you fielded the ball cleanly, it would be an out. If you missed the ball, a run was awarded to the guy throwing. We would do it in a fast manner so you had to keep your hands and feet ready at all times. That game really helped me become a good infielder."

Besides playing creative games such as "the wall," Vizquel added, "I was one of those guys that always liked to be in the field instead of hitting when we played baseball in the park. That's why I'm a natural fielder and not a natural hitter."

According to Vizquel, "Everybody has a different style of playing the position. My style is very basic, I don't try to do too much with the ball. I think I can make tough plays look easy just because of the way I catch the ball."

Candaele agrees with the philosophy of sticking with the basics. "I just try to keep the ball in front of me, keep my hands in front of me, and watch the ball go into my glove," said Candaele.

The new infield that was formed this year meant a change in positions for Jim Thome and Tony Fernandez. Thome, who had become a fixture at third base since the opening of Jacobs Field, moved to first to make room for the slick fielding Gold Glover Matt Williams. "For a position change like that, the first thing you need to have is a willing student and Jimmy was all that," said Goryl. "One thing we wanted to do was make it as simple as possible. I emphasized the fact that first base is a one-handed position and that learning how to play it well depended on how he developed his glove hand. Jimmy always had a good glove hand, so it was relatively simple."

"The mental part of playing the position was the most difficult, it wasn't the physical areas he had to deal with. Jimmy is a very good athlete, the thing he had to learn was all of the responsibilities of playing first base. It was difficult at first, but the more he did it, the better he got," Goryl explained.

As for Fernandez, who was a four-time Gold Glove award winner at shortstop, he had to make the transition to second base. Goryl stated, "the pivot at second was the most difficult part of the transition, because Tony didn't have much experience playing from that side of the bag. First of all, you're not able to see if the runner is on top of you because your back is to the runner. He also had a tough time knowing where to position himself during the double play. But he's working on it every day, and it's paid off."

WELCOME TO JACOB'S FIELD

Baseball's most important pitch this season won't come from a mound. In an effort to combat drinking and driving, Major League Baseball, together with the Techniques for Effective Alcohol Management (TEAM) coalition, continues to make a comprehensive appeal to fans this year. The message: PLEASE DON'T DRINK AND DRIVE!

As part of the TEAM program, each Major League club reviews its alcohol policies and runs public service announcements asking fans to drink responsibly and warns them against the consequences of drinking and driving.

The Cleveland Indians want you safe, because we want you back. Please drink responsibly.

In an effort to make everyone's visit to the Ballpark as safe and enjoyable as possible, a list of guidelines has been developed.

The Indians ask that you follow these guidelines, or be subject to ejection from the Ballpark, and in some cases, subject to criminal prosecution by the Cleveland Police Department.

To ensure that each game is a pleasant experience for each and every guest, the Indians have established the following "Ground Rules:"

- Jacobs Field is a non-smoking facility with designated smoking areas. Non-smoking areas include: the entire seating bowl of the Ballpark (including the outdoor seating of Suites and Club Seats); KidsLand; and all public rest rooms. Smoking is permitted in the following areas: Back Yard; Patio area on the Main Concourse; all three Concourse levels (Main, Mezzanine and Upper Deck) on the East Ninth Street side of the Ballpark and Upper Deck pavilion area on the Carnegie side

of the Ballpark (all of these locations are open-air areas with picnic tables, concession stands, and rest room facilities nearby); Bleacher Concourse on Eagle Ave. side of the Ballpark. In addition, the Terrace Club and Club Lounge have both smoking and non-smoking areas. Jacobs Field has signage identifying designated smoking areas for your convenience.

- Cans, glass bottles, plastic beverage containers, thermos bottles, and squeeze bottles are not permitted into Jacobs Field.
- Due to security concerns, hard-sided coolers/containers are not permitted. Soft-sided containers and coolers are permitted.
- Food items and juice boxes are permitted inside the Ballpark, provided they are not inside a hard-sided cooler or container.
- Pets are not allowed inside the Ballpark. However, guide dogs for persons with sight disabilities are permitted.
- The resale (scalping) of Indians tickets is strictly prohibited and subject to prosecution by the Cleveland Police Department.
- Fans are permitted to bring and display banners, provided they do not interfere with the game, obstruct the view of fans, or carry obscene, political or commercial messages. Banners may be hung from the facing of the Upper Deck. Poles and sticks are strictly prohibited.

• Fans may bring small umbrellas into Jacobs Field as long as they do not interfere with other fans' enjoyment of the game. Large golf umbrellas are discouraged.

• Cameras and video recorders are permitted. However, any resale of the photography or video is strictly prohibited. Team name, logos, and players' likenesses are all copyrighted material.

• Persons observed breaking the law (eg. using illegal drugs, or drinking alcohol under age) will be subject to immediate ejection and/or criminal prosecution.

• Persons using obscene or abusive language, or engaging in any other antisocial conduct offensive to those around them, will be asked by Indians personnel to cease this conduct. If the offensive conduct persists, those involved will be ejected from Jacobs Field.

• Persons entering the playing field, throwing or attempting to throw objects onto the field will be subject to immediate ejection from Jacobs Field and/or criminal prosecution.

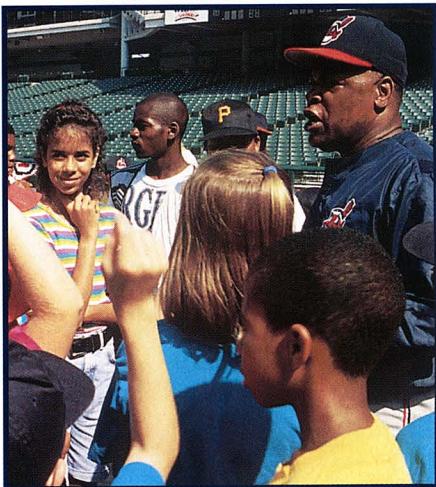
If you have any questions, comments, suggestions, or problems, please visit the Indians Guest Service Center, located at Section 116 of the Main Concourse and in Section 519 of the Upper Concourse, or see one of our "Hosts" throughout the Ballpark. The Indians thank you for your cooperation.

"It is our intention to make our home a safe, comfortable, family-oriented facility so every trip to Jacobs Field is most enjoyable," said Dennis Lehman, Indians Executive Vice President of Business.

"We believe these fan ground rules will ensure the intimate environment that we all seek."



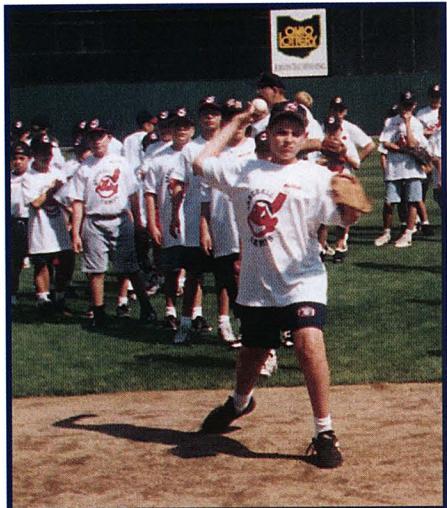
Photo Credit: Gregory Drezdow



WEEK-LONG SUMMER DAY CAMPS

Once again in 1997, the Cleveland Indians will give young athletes an opportunity to hone their baseball skills through week-long day camps. The Cleveland Indians Baseball Day Camps are three separate one-week programs offering boys and girls, ages 12 to 16, baseball skill development opportunities in an exciting setting. Locations are held in various areas of Northeast Ohio. The 1996 camps were held on the high school ball fields at Copley, Orange, and Rocky River, Ohio.

The Cleveland Indians Baseball Day Camps are highlighted by daily visits by the Tribe's Major League coaching staff. Each coach conducts a clinic on his specialty. Local college and high



school baseball coaches will also be on hand to provide expert instruction. Directed by former Indians Gold Glove outfielder and current Tribe broadcaster, Rick Manning, the camps also feature special visits by current Tribe players.

The Cleveland Indians Baseball Day Camps begin in June. For more detailed information on cost, dates, and locations, please call (216) 543-1131.

INDIANS PARENT-CHILD CLINICS

For parents who want to spend a day of fun, excitement, and learning baseball with his or her child, the Cleveland Indians are offering three separate one-day parent-child clinics in 1997.

The Cleveland Indians Parent-Child Clinics are held at Jacobs Field beginning at 10:00am and ending at the conclusion of that day's game. There is no age limit nor specific athletic ability required. Admission is limited to 100 couples on a first-come, first-served basis. Participants receive instruction from Rick Manning and other members of the Indians coaching staff at Jacobs Field. During that time, the parent works with his or her child.

Clinic participants are served a light lunch. Following lunch, the participants take part in an autograph-photograph session with two Indians players. Afterwards, the participants get to observe batting practice and the day concludes with that evening's game. Game ticket is not included in the price of the clinic.

For information on dates, and cost of the clinics, call (216) 543-1131.

JACOB'S FIELD TOURS

When it comes to popularity, Jacobs Field Tours rank only second to attending an actual game at the Indians state-of-

the-art baseball facility. In 1996, more than 32,000 visitors took advantage of the opportunity to get a behind-the-scenes look at Jacobs Field. Tours provide a unique view of the Ballpark from the Home Dugout, a Party Suite, and the Press Box. Visitors also see a special video of the restricted areas, such as the home club-



Photo credit: Gregory Drezdzon

house. For the general public, tours are conducted from May to September, Monday through Saturday (excluding holidays, day games, and special events) and select Sundays during the summer months. Tickets may be purchased at the Indians Main Box Office, Indians Team Shops, and at area Ticketmaster Ticket Centers beginning in April.

Advance purchase is suggested. Call (216) 420-4400 for more information.

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN MORE INFORMATION REGARDING THESE, OR ANY OTHER INDIANS COMMUNITY RELATIONS EFFORT IN NORTHEAST OHIO, PLEASE CONTACT THE CLEVELAND INDIANS COMMUNITY RELATIONS DEPARTMENT AT (216) 420-4400.



MINOR LEAGUE OPERATIONS/SCOUTING

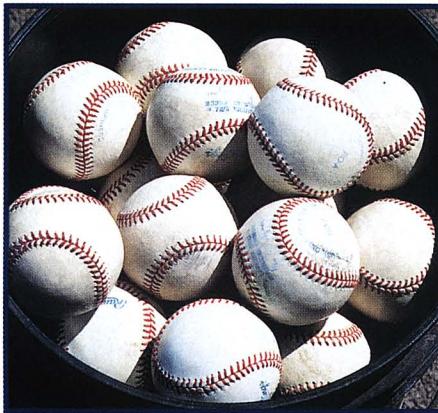


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BASEBALL OPERATIONS

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Dan O'Dowd Director of Baseball Operations/
Assistant GM
Lee MacPhail Director of Scouting
Mark Shapiro Director, Minor League Operations
Wendy Hoppel Administrator, Player Personnel

MINOR LEAGUE OPERATIONS

Bud Black. . Special Assistant to Baseball Operations
Boyd Coffie. Minor League Field Coordinator
Mike Brown. Pitching Coordinator
Brian Graham. Defensive Coordinator
Harry Spilman. Instructor
Gordie MacKenzie. Instructor
Ted Kubiak. Instructor
Dr. Charles A. Maher. Instructor/Sport Psychologist
Trent Clark. Minor League Strength
and Conditioning Coach

SCOUTING

Jesse Flores. West Coast Supervisor
Jerry Jordan. East Coast Supervisor
Bob Mayer. Midwest Supervisor
Bill Schmidt. National Crosschecker

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Steve Avila AK, HI, ID, MT, OR, WA, WY,
British Columbia, Alberta, Can.
Doug Baker Southern CA, Southern NV
Keith Boeck AZ, NM, CO, UT, El Paso, TX
Ted Brzenk. IA, Northern IL,
Western IN, MN, ND, SD, WI
Paul Cogan Northern CA, Northern NV
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Jay Franklin Southern IL, KS, MO, NE
Jim Gabella Northern FL
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Winston Llenas. Dominican Republic
Guy Mader CT, ME, MA, NH, NY, RI, VT
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Max Semler. KY, MS, TN
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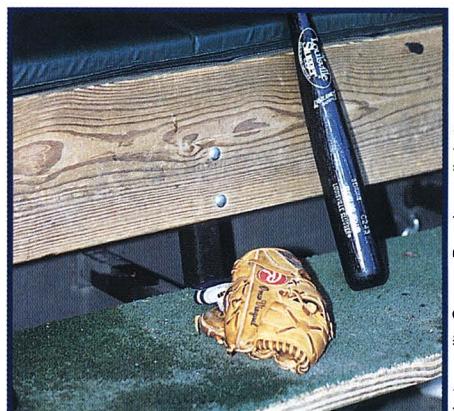
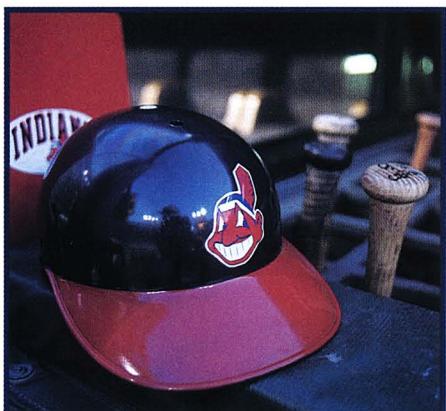
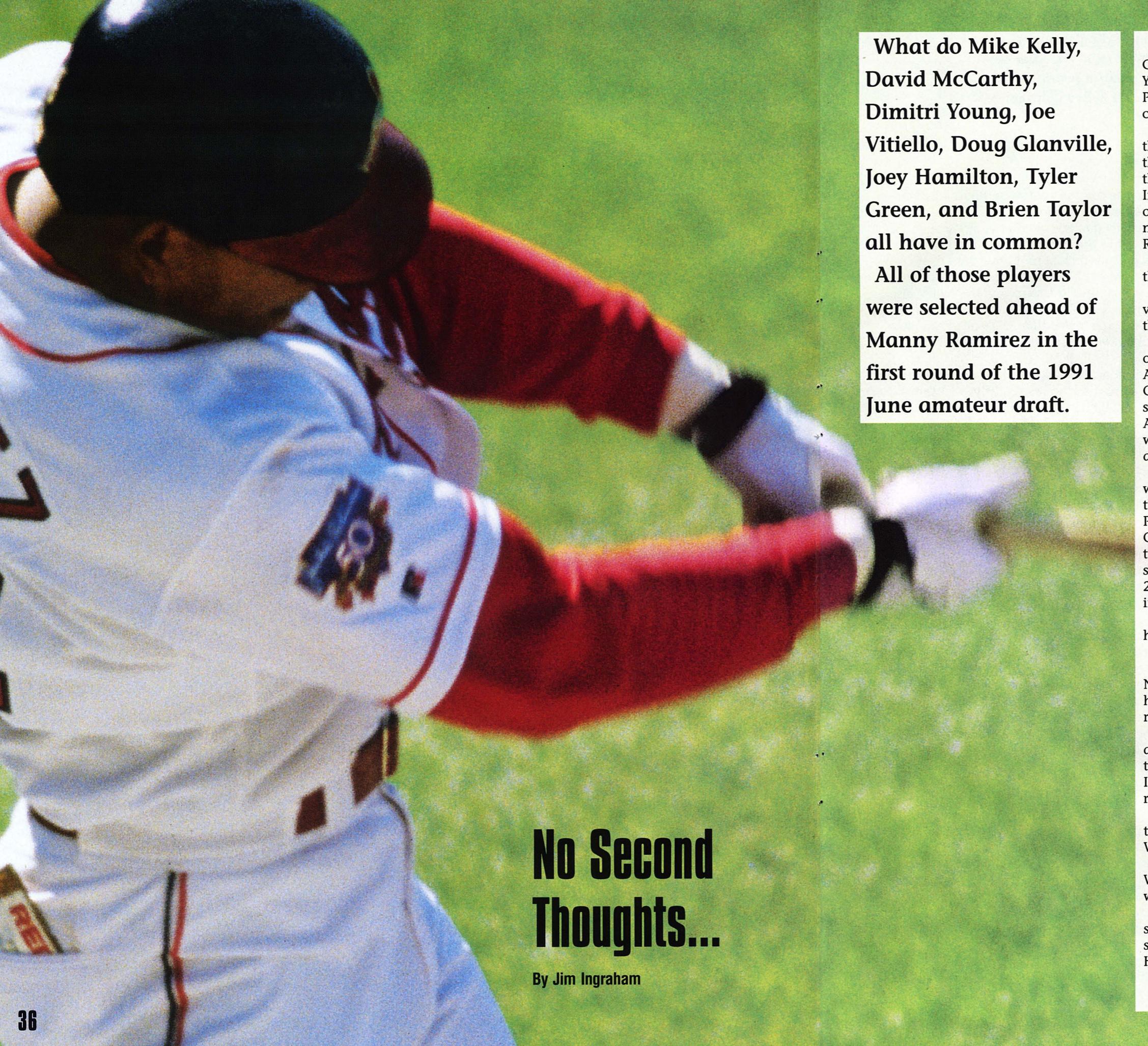


Photo credit: Gregory Drezdzon, all photos



No Second Thoughts...

By Jim Ingraham

What do Mike Kelly, David McCarthy, Dimitri Young, Joe Vitiello, Doug Glanville, Joey Hamilton, Tyler Green, and Brien Taylor all have in common?

All of those players were selected ahead of Manny Ramirez in the first round of the 1991 June amateur draft.

What do the Braves, Twins, Cardinals, Royals, Orioles, Cubs, Yankees, Brewers, Astros, Padres, Phillies, and Mariners have in common?

After all those teams made their picks in the first round of the 1991 June Amateur Draft, then—and only then—the Indians selected a high school outfielder from New York City named Manuel Aristides Ramirez.

The Indians had the 13th pick that year.

Get this: they weren't even nervous that Ramirez wouldn't be there when their turn came.

"Mickey White did a good job of keeping it quiet," said Indians Assistant General Manager Dan O'Dowd. White was the Indians scouting director at the time. And it was he who orchestrated what might be the best all-around draft in Tribe history.

In addition to getting Ramirez with the first pick, the Indians that year also selected Herbert Perry in the second round, Chad Ogea in the third, Paul Byrd in the fourth, Pep Harris in the seventh, Albie Lopez in the 20th, and Damian Jackson in the 44th round.

The crown jewel of that draft, however, was Ramirez.

Is 13 a lucky number or what?

The Indians, selecting in the No. 13 hole, took Ramirez, gave him \$250,000 to sign, and the rest is second-guessing history.

"We talked about Allen Watson a lot," said O'Dowd as he recalled the game plan that day in the Indians war room as the first round unfolded.

Fortunately for the Indians, that's all they did was talk about Watson.

A left-handed college pitcher, Watson was still on the board when the Indians' turn arrived.

But the Tribe finally settled on a sweet-swinging 18-year-old shortstop from George Washington High School in New York City.

That's right, a shortstop. That was Ramirez's position

in high school.

Here's something else about Ramirez's high school career that you might not believe: in his senior year he stole 31 bases.

That's almost twice as many stolen bases as Ramirez has in his Major League CAREER.

But the Indians aren't complaining. They are willing to take Ramirez's hitting prowess and leave the running to somebody else.

It's not like they drafted him for his speed, OK?

Ramirez was drafted for his bat. A bat so advanced that Indians scouts could see its potential even in that spring of 1991.

"Even at that age Manny was a polished offensive player," O'Dowd said. "As a hitter, he doesn't look very different now than he did then."

And he looked very good then.

As a senior at George Washington High School—the same school that produced Rod Carew—Ramirez batted a soft-ballish .650, with 14 home runs and 40 RBI. Those power numbers came in 63 at-bats. In other words, he averaged one homer every 4.5 at-bats and one RBI every 1.5 at-bats. Of Ramirez's 41 hits that year, 27 were for extra bases.

A good slugging percentage is .700. A great slugging percentage is .800.

In high school, Ramirez's slugging percentage was 1.40.

Now you know why the Indians tried to keep quiet about Ramirez.

"What happens," said O'Dowd, "is that as soon as teams find out you have an interest in a guy, everyone starts showing up at the games."

That's why the Indians tried to low-key it going into the 1991 June Draft.

"Manny was not projected as a first-rounder at the start of that year, but he played his way into the first round," O'Dowd said.

"That happens a lot with players every year."

Still, the Indians were fairly



Photo credit: Gregory Drezdzon

"He came to Burlington that year and dominated right from the get-go. That's when we pretty much knew we had a helluva player." — Dan O'Dowd

top players in the country each year, but to also project how much better a given player will get in the future. That can be difficult to do, whether you're scouting in the inner city, or in the middle of Wyoming.

"There are a lot of factors that enter into it," O'Dowd said. "You're talking about watching hitters swinging aluminum bats against kids throwing the ball 60 mph. But in Manny's case, his swing today is in many ways exactly the same as it was then. He's always looked very comfortable at the plate. There aren't many flaws in his swing."

Indeed, with Ramirez, "evaluating" wasn't as important as simply monitoring his senior year. White was very vocal in his belief that Ramirez would one day become the player that, well, Ramirez has become.

He's that rarest of players with whom not much tinkering was done on the mechanics of his swing.

"He's always had very good mechanics," said Charlie Manuel, the Indians' hitting coach. "The first time I saw him was in the instructional league (in the fall of 1991). And he was a very good looking hitter then. The ball just jumped off his bat. And he had really good bat speed."

Ramirez's ascent up the Minor League ladder was rapid. He hit the ground running—or at least hitting—and he didn't stop hitting until he made it to the big leagues.

After signing with the Indians following the draft, Ramirez was sent to Class A Burlington (NC) where he nearly won the league's triple crown. He led the Appalachian League in home runs (19) and RBI (63), placed third in hitting with a .326 average, and was named the league's "Most Valuable Player."

"He came to Burlington that year and dominated right from the get-go," O'Dowd said. "That's when we pretty much knew we had a helluva player."

One of the most appealing features of Ramirez's approach to hitting, aside from the inherent power he has to all fields, is that he doesn't try to pull everything. So many young hitters coming up are overly pull-conscious. Many young position players believe that the quickest way to make a lot of money in the game is to become a home run hitter. And the quickest way to do that, they feel, is to try to pull every pitch that's thrown to them.

That, of course, is also the quickest way to get into a slump.

Ramirez never fell into that trap.

"Manny hits best when he hits the ball to right field

confident that despite his monster numbers, Ramirez would still be on the board when their turn arrived.

"We had a pretty good idea he would get to us," O'Dowd said.

The crime rate in the neighborhood where George Washington High School is located is one of the highest in the country. There is a large Dominican population in that area of New York, and for many of the kids who grow up there, baseball is king. Whereas basketball rules in many parts of the inner city, in Washington Heights, NY, baseball is still the game of choice.

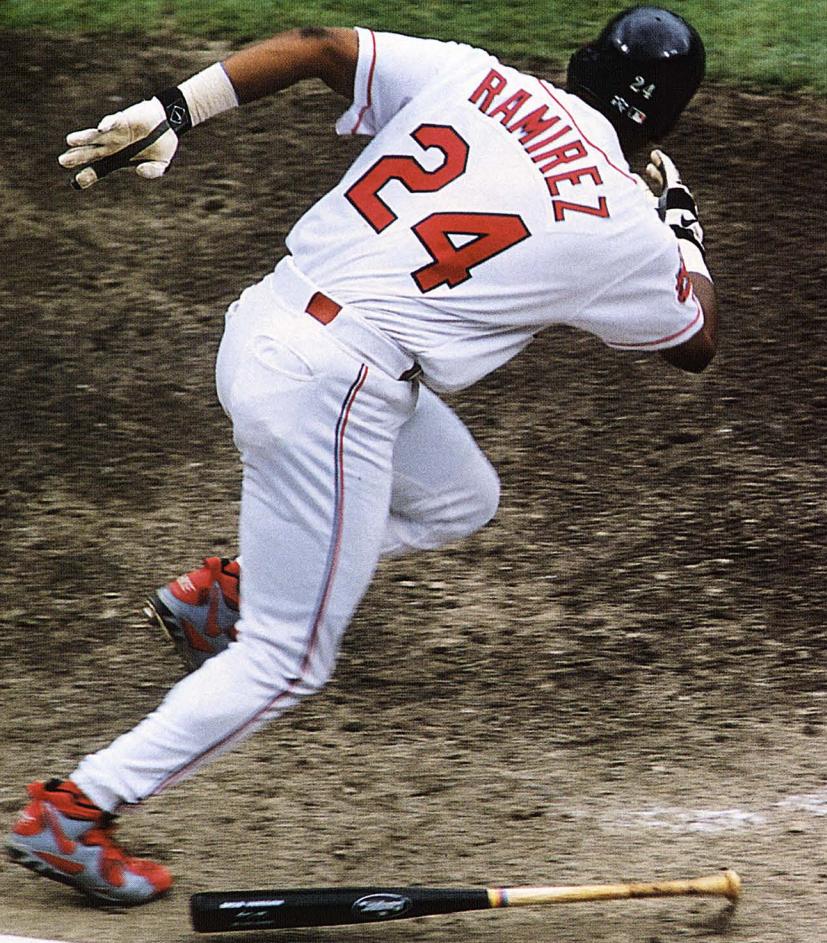
"Basketball is still big in that part of the city, but baseball has found a niche there, too," O'Dowd said. "It's very competitive."

Said Ramirez: "My school is really a good baseball school. They've always had a good team."

The tricky part is evaluating the players on that team.

"One of the things you find is that in scouting inner city kids, you have to project more," O'Dowd said. "For the most part inner city kids aren't as polished as the kids who have grown up in a more structured program. Also the competition inner city kids play against is not always real good."

A major facet of a scout's job is not just to identify the



and right-center," Manuel said.

"Most high school hitters you see are really pull-conscious," O'Dowd said. "But Manny was always a natural opposite field hitter. That's always the swing he's had. Jim Thome had the same type of swing when he first came up. Both of those guys hit balls to the opposite field with power."

Ramirez also displayed a remarkable ability to handle pitches of all kinds, even at a young age.

That year at Burlington, his bat was death to fastballs.

"I remember reading the reports his manager, Dave Keller, would send in after each game," Manuel said. "Every day there'd be something in there about Manny jumping on a fastball and hitting it a long way."

Following his impressive leap into professional baseball at Burlington, Ramirez moved up to Kinston (NC) in 1992, but a broken hamate bone in his left hand limited him to just one game after July 4. Still, he managed to hit 13

Photo credit: Gregory Drezdzon



PARK, DINE, PLAY. THE
TAKE THE AVENUE

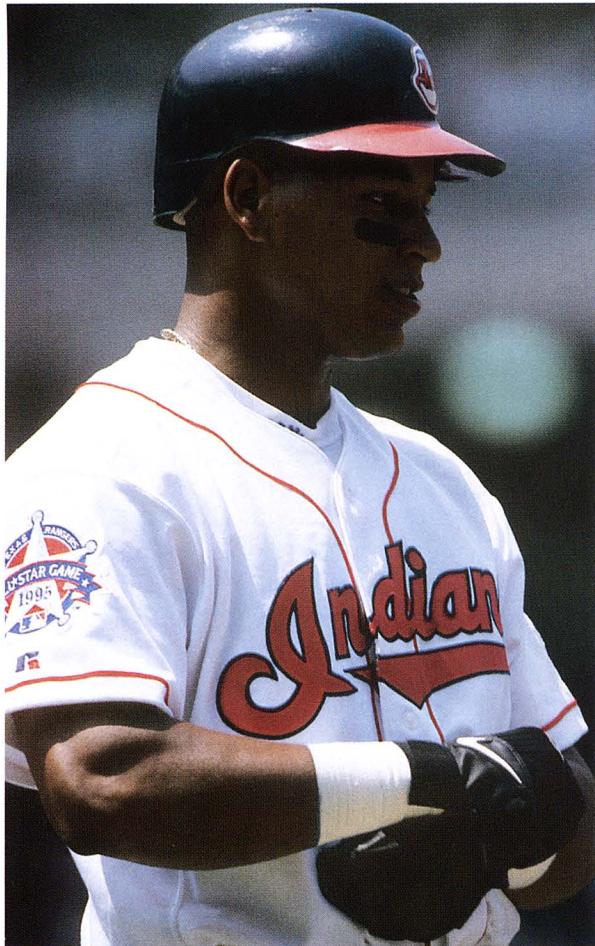


Photo credit: Gregory Drexzyn

He's already better than anyone else taken before him in that landmark (for the Indians) 1991 draft.

Manuel said Ramirez also has the right mindset to improve as a hitter.

"He doesn't try to hit home runs. He thinks like a line drive hitter," Manuel said.

What's in the future for Manny Ramirez?

"I think he can be a better hitter than he is," Manuel said. "If he gets 600 at-bats every year, I think you'll see 25 to 40 home runs, but also with a high average."

O'Dowd points out another reason why we may not yet have seen the best of Manny Ramirez.

"He's only 25 years old," O'Dowd said. "He's still young. He's going to get better."

He's already better than anyone else taken before him in that landmark (for the Indians) 1991 draft. Let's face it. Joe Vitiello? Mike Kelly? Doug Glanville?

Oh, by the way...

Allen Watson? The pitcher the Indians briefly talked about selecting instead of Ramirez? He was taken by the Cardinals with the 21st pick in the first round.

The Indians, at No.13, took Manny Ramirez.

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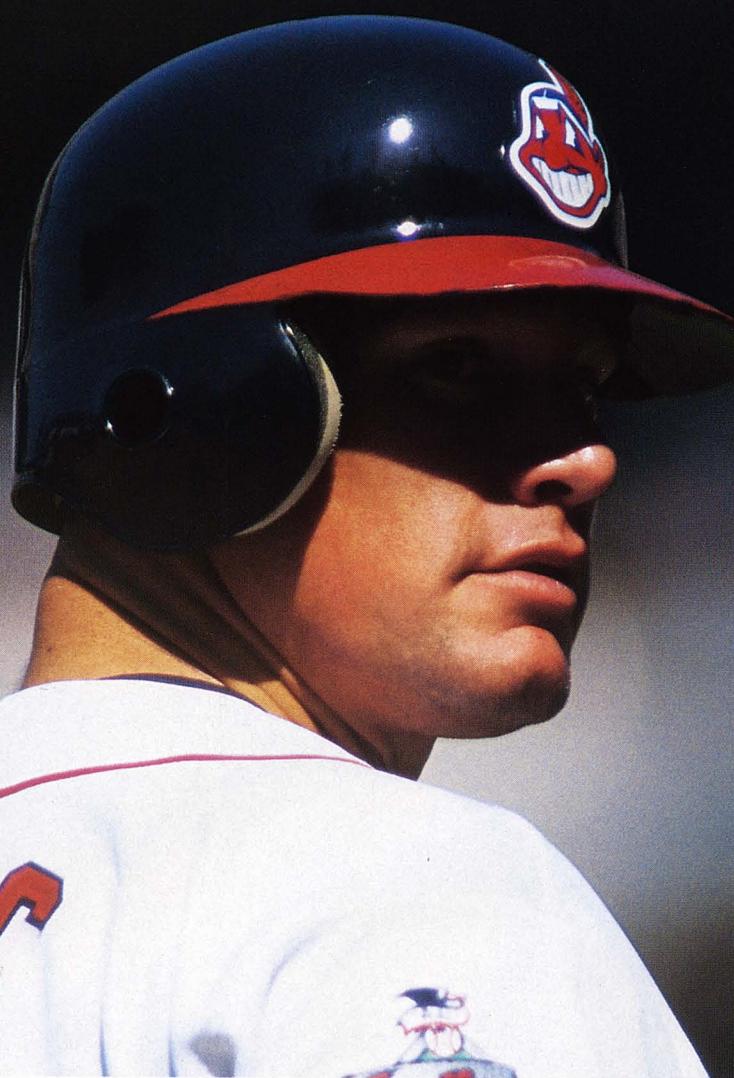
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Whatever It Takes



by Steve Herrick

Having been the Indians 17th round draft pick in 1989, Brian Giles is used to overcoming large odds.

Players drafted in the 17th round don't get the big signing bonuses. They start out at the bottom rung of the Minor Leagues. They have to outperform the players drafted in front of them to catch the eye of the people running the organization. They also have to prove themselves at every level to get promoted the following year.

That's exactly what Giles managed to do. And that's the reason he's with the Indians this season.

"It was kind of hard," Giles said of his way up the Minor League ladder. "I had to put in a lot of hard work. The biggest thing for me was people didn't think I could get past the next level. I had to put up the numbers at each level. My goal was to move up a level each year."

Giles did that, advancing a level each season between 1989 and '94. Because the Indians outfield has been loaded with stars the past three years, Giles spent most of 1995 and half of '96 at the Triple A level.

Another roadblock was thrown in his way this year at Spring Training. Throughout the offseason and for most of camp, Giles was penciled in to see a lot of

playing time in left field. Albert Belle left to sign with the White Sox in November, which left the opportunity there for Giles. On March 25, one week before the season opener, all that changed. In one of the biggest trades in franchise history, the Indians sent Kenny Lofton and Alan Embree to Atlanta for David Justice and Marquis Grissom.

Trading Lofton for Grissom was a swap of Gold Glove centerfielders. The addition of Justice wasn't good news for Giles. Instead of playing most of the time, he was suddenly the fourth outfielder and part-time designated hitter.

"The trade pushed me off left field," said Giles.

A few hours after the trade, Indians Manager Mike Hargrove talked to Giles.

"He told me I was going to Cleveland and I was going to be part of the ballclub," said Giles. "I guess he was explaining my role."

Giles, 26, admits that he was a little down after the trade.

"It's disappointing," he said. "You want to play every day and get that opportunity. The trade put me back as a bench player and a role player, but I can't sit and pout."

Going back to his Minor League roots, Giles knew there was only one way to handle the adversity.

"I worked hard when I played every day," he said.

"It's a little different now. It's an adjustment. Mentally, you have to stay prepared. You can't let it affect you."

Giles has seen action at all three outfield positions. He started several games in center field, a new position for him this season, when Grissom was on the disabled list.

"The versatility helps a lot," said Giles. "Being able to play all three positions will help me in my career. I feel pretty comfortable in center field."

"Brian did a good job out there," said Hargrove. "He didn't have to make any spectacular plays, which made me feel good, but he made all the routine plays, which also made me feel good."

Giles has had some big moments this season. His ninth-inning home run off relief ace Troy Percival gave the Indians a win over California in April.

Giles got his first taste of the Majors late in the '95 season. He spent most of the year at Class AAA Buffalo, where he hit .310 with 15 HR and 67 RBI. Giles was called up after Buffalo finished the playoffs. In his first game, he got a hit off Boston's Roger Clemens. His first home run came off Jeff Montgomery, who at the time was Kansas City's ace reliever.

"I came up after our season and got some hits," he said. "I got my feet wet. I thought I swung the bat well at Triple A."

Giles made an even bigger impression last season. After batting .314 with 20 homers and 64 RBI in 83 games at Buffalo, he was called up on July 12. That night, he hit a pinch-hit home run in the ninth inning off Minnesota's Dave Stevens to tie the game, which the Indians went on to win. Giles batted .355 with five homers and 27 RBI in 51 games.

Sports has been a big part of Giles' life since he was a youngster. He played football and baseball at Granite Hills High School in El Cajon, CA, a suburb of San Diego.



Photo credit: Gregory Drezdzon

"I loved football, but when I looked at taking it to the next level, all the players were twice my size and faster," he said.

In Giles' sophomore year, he was teammates with Tommy Vardell, a running back who went on to stardom at Stanford. Vardell played with the Browns and was with the San Francisco 49ers last year.

"He was a few years ahead of me," said Giles, who played tailback.

"He was like a stud on our team. He was really good. He could run pretty well. I played a little bit my sophomore year. I had to fill his shoes when he left. It was kind of fun now that I look back on it."

Giles said several schools in the Western Athletic Conference, including San Diego State, Fresno State, and Utah, contacted him about playing football, but baseball was his ultimate choice.

"It was something I wanted to do," he said. "I wanted to play baseball since I was a kid. It was a tough decision. I figured I might as well do something I wanted to do since I was little."

Giles was good enough in baseball to attract the attention of Major League scouts. The draft in June of '89 left him with a decision.

"Several teams talked to me before the draft," he said. "Cleveland was one of the last teams that talked to me. I waited a while to make up my mind—about six weeks. I signed in July."

When Giles was drafted, the Indians weren't exactly among baseball's elite.

"When I was drafted by Cleveland, they were terrible," he said. "I wanted to play for the Padres."

Having grown up in San Diego, Giles went to a lot of Padres' games at Jack Murphy Stadium. His favorite players were Dave Winfield and Tony Gwynn. Ironically, he got to be teammates with Winfield when he was called up late in the 1995 season.

"I told him I didn't want to make him feel old, but

I watched him play a lot of games at 'The Murph' when I was growing up," laughed Giles. "He said, 'Thanks, you made me feel old.' "

After signing with the Indians, Giles, just 18 at the time, was shipped to Burlington, NC, to play rookie ball. He faced several adjustments.

"The biggest adjustment was being on my own," he said. "When you're living at home, your parents take care of you. You don't realize the things you have to do when you're by yourself. I went from San Diego to a smaller city. The weather was a big difference, too."

Not to mention the adjustment to playing the game.

"The biggest difference was probably the speed of the ball," he said. "There was also the adjustment to playing every day. In high school, you played maybe two or three times a week. All of a sudden, I was playing every day and there were a lot of long bus rides."

Giles credits his parents for getting him interested in sports.

"They were a big influence," he said. "They threw me in a lot of youth sports. I liked to play in the backyard. I played soccer and then I got interested in Little League."

Giles' brother, Marcus, has been a visitor to the Indians clubhouse during homestands. He was

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League Park...Cleveland Stadium...Jacobs Field



Barney Taxel Photography

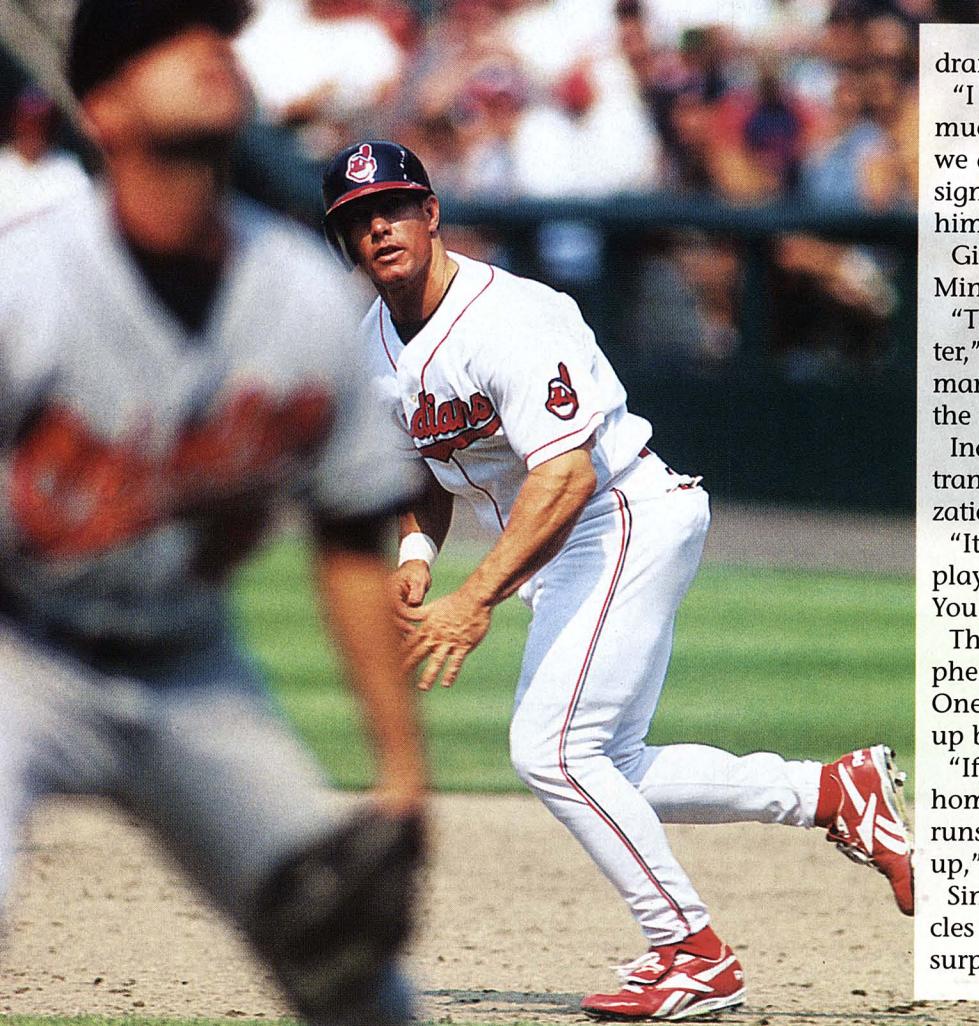
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drafted in 1996 by the Braves.

"I haven't been able to see him play that much," said Giles. "When he was playing, we always had conflicting schedules when I signed in '89. I think visiting me is good for him. It gives him a taste of what it's like."

Giles cites several differences between the Minors and the Majors.

"The travel and the ballfields are a lot better," he said. "That stands out. There are many differences, but the game's still played the same."

Indians baseball has undergone quite a transformation since Giles joined the organization.

"It's exciting," he said. "It's a nice place to play. There's a packed house every night. You can't ask for a better atmosphere."

The only thing that could make the atmosphere better would be playing every day. One of Giles' teammates thinks he could put up big numbers with an everyday job.

"If he played every day, he'd hit at least 30 homers and drive in between 85 and 100 runs, depending on where he hit in the line-up," said pitcher Orel Hershiser.

Since he has already hurdled several obstacles on his way to the big leagues, don't be surprised if Giles lives up to that prediction.

Photo Credit: Gregory Drezdzon

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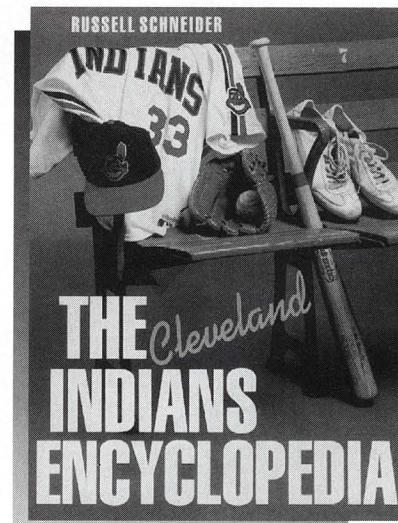
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HOW TO SCORE

Baseball fans can enjoy the sport to the fullest extent by keeping track of the game and pinpointing those big plays that bring victory or defeat. All you need is a basic knowledge of the rules.

Although there are countless scoring methods, experts use a simple code based on numbering players by position and tracing action through the use of symbols. It's easy and fun.

In fact, why not devise your own scoring system with the basic suggestions on this page.

One such suggestion on player substitutions is to use a heavy or wavy line under or over a box to indicate a change, either of a player or batter.

If a batter flies to the right-fielder, merely use the figure 9. If it is a foul fly, use 9F.

Now that you are an official "scorer," you can really enjoy baseball games.

Team	Pos.	1	2	
Rightfielder	9	4-6 W		Walked and was forced out at second (2nd baseman to shortstop).
2nd Baseman	4	3 ④FO		Reached first on fielder's choice when runner was forced out, advanced to third on double by 3rd place hitter, scored on 4th place hitter's sacrifice fly.
1st Baseman	3	=		Doubled; did not advance further.
Centerfielder	8	SF 8		Flied out to center field scoring runner on third.
Designated Hitter	DH	K		Struck out—end of the inning.
Leftfielder	7		4-6	Singled; later forced out at second (2nd baseman to shortstop in first half of double play).
Catcher	2		DP 4-6-3	Hit into double play (2nd baseman to shortstop to 1st baseman).
3rd Baseman	5		≡	Hit home run.
Shortstop	6		7	Flied out to leftfielder—end of inning.
Pitcher	1			
TOTALS	R H		I I	I 2

USE THESE SYMBOLS FOR PLAYS

- Single
- = Double
- ≡ Triple
- ≡ Home Run
- E Error
- F Foul Fly
- DP Double Play

- FC Fielder's Choice
- HP Hit by Pitcher
- WP Wild Pitch
- SB Stolen Base
- SH Sacrifice Hit
- SF Sacrifice Fly
- CS Caught Stealing

- PB Passed Ball
- BK Balk
- K Struck Out
- BB Base on Balls
- FO Forced Out
- IW Intentional Walk

CAN YOU SCORE THIS PLAY?

The ball was hit to the shortstop, who threw it to the second baseman. The second baseman was able to force out the runner who had been at first. He then threw the ball to the first baseman to get the batter out, turning a double play.

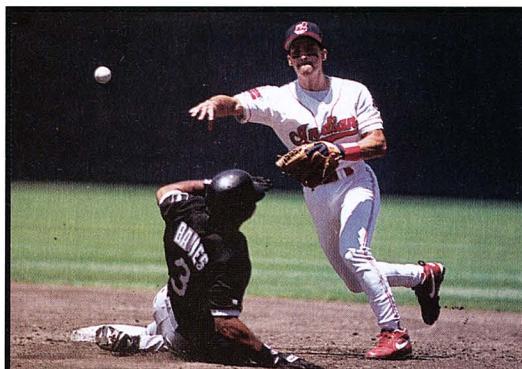


Photo credit: Gregory Drezdzon

BK	SB
WP	W



In this example, the hitter reached first base on a walk, stole second, advanced to third on pitcher's balk, scored on a wild pitch.

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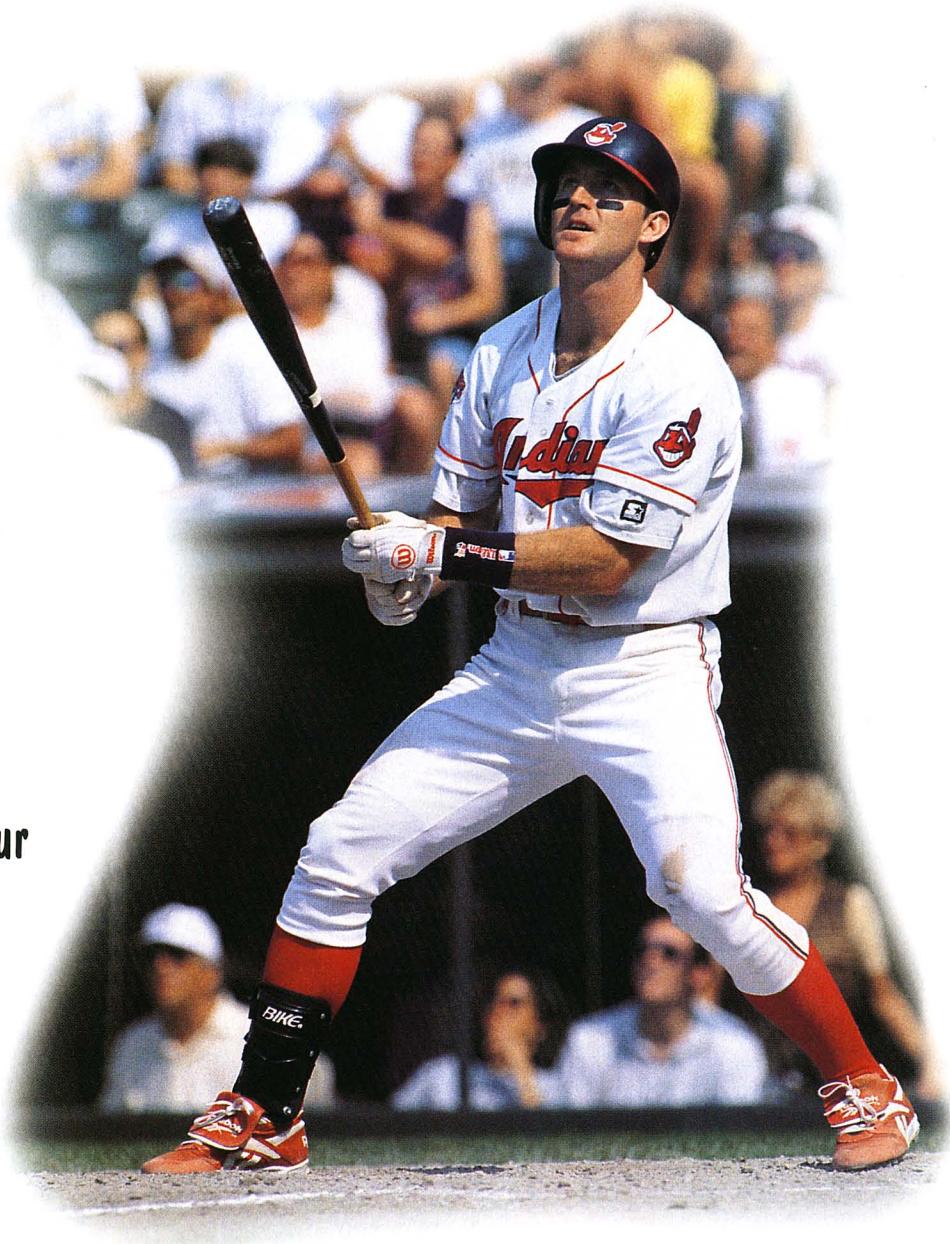


Photo Credit: Gregory Drezdzon

Indians Slugger Jim Thome spent three years in the Tribe's Minor League system before he put on an Indians uniform. But you just have to spend a few minutes at the Indians Team Shops, because here, you can get official Tribe jerseys and caps just like the players wear. You can also get T-shirts, sweatshirts, sweaters, jackets, baseballs, pennants, flags, videos, children's items, and novelties, too.

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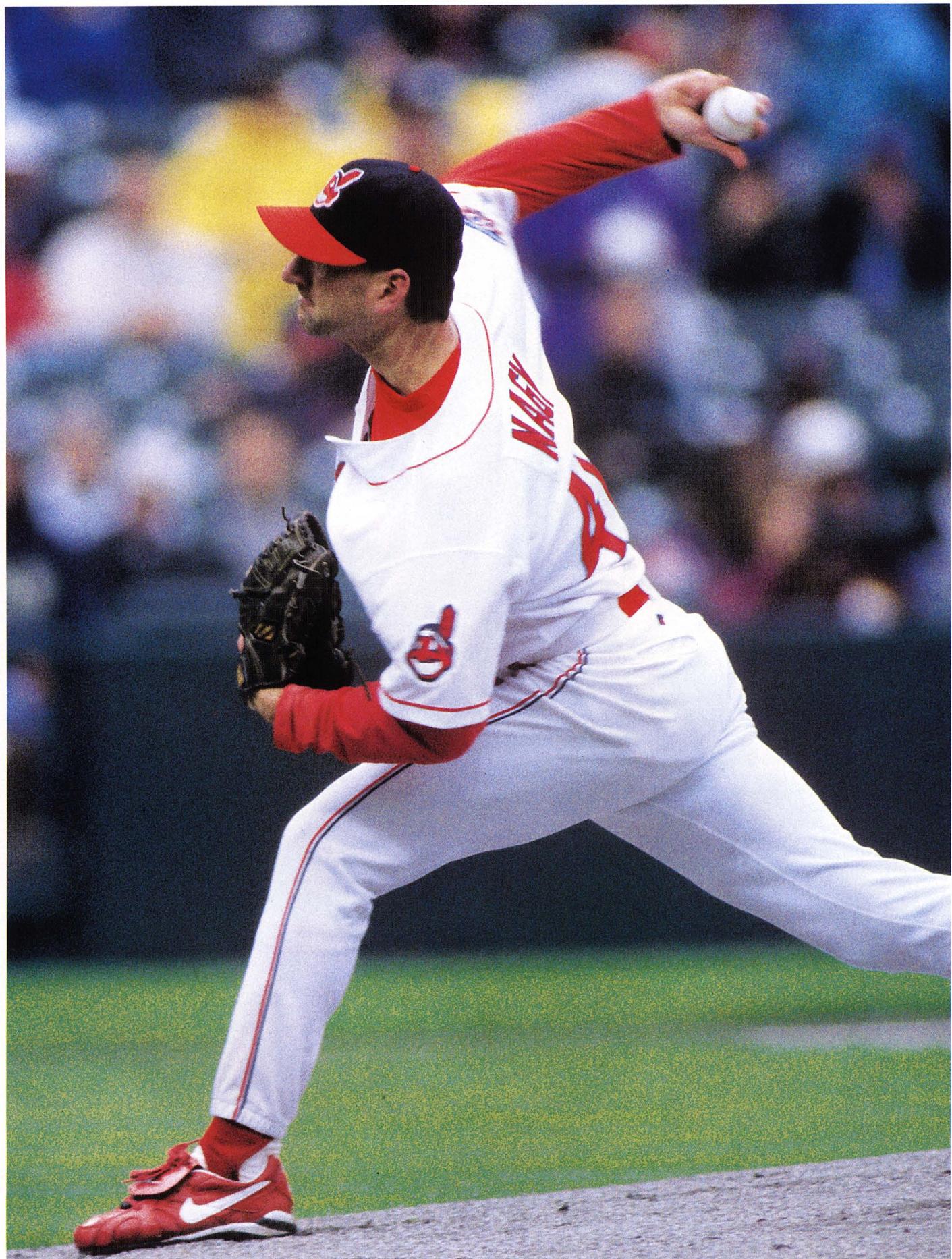


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